



**KNOWLEDGE ACCESS FOR RURAL INTERCONNECTED AREAS NETWORK
KARIANET**



**EVALUATION OF THE EXPERIENCE
OF THE NATIONAL NETWORK
IN EGYPT**

DRAFT VERSION 2.0

**SUBMITTED TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE
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PREPARED BY THE REGIONAL COORDINATION UNIT

This report was prepared in Arabic on the request of KariaNet RCU by Said Hussein and the members of the Facilitation and Coordination Unit of the National Network under the supervision of Dr. Fadia Nosseir, Acting Director of Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Egypt. It was reviewed by Dr. Mustapha Malki, Regional Coordinator of KariaNet, before it was presented by the author during the 3rd Annual Thematic Workshop held in Cairo (28-31 October 2007). The present document represents a translation of the original report, commissioned by KariaNet RCU.

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Evaluation Report of the Pilot Experience of the National Network on Knowledge Sharing for Rural Poverty Reduction

1. General Background about Knowledge Sharing

During the past years, the Egyptian Government gave a great attention to agricultural and rural development, given that more than 50% of the population live in rural areas. It devoted a lot of available local financial and material resources in order to enhance agricultural production standards and improve farmers' income and living conditions. It carried out many development projects, which were financially supported by different external donors. The ultimate goal of all these initiatives was mainly to reduce rural poverty.

However, most of these projects faced many problems throughout their implementation process, mainly related to knowledge, methodologies, referential experiences, etc. Nonetheless, some of them succeeded to develop and promote sound technologies and methodologies that helped small farmers enhancing their production and consequently increase their net income.

While carrying out these projects under different services of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation or other ministries and public authorities in Egypt, it was found that there was no link and no contact between these projects, although they were acting for the same cause. The lacking communication forum or channel led to a very low flow of experiences and successful stories sharing and exchange. It was believed that some success stories and good practices, developed by certain projects, could serve as models or references for other projects in solving similar problems.

2. KariaNet Initiative to Establish a National Network in Egypt

In order to help the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation in finding a suitable solution for the above-mentioned situation and foster knowledge sharing and experience exchange between development projects, KariaNet suggested, in August 2005, an initiative to establish a national network whose main objective is to provide a communication forum for all development projects and initiatives that work in the field of rural poverty reduction, and particularly those financed by international donors (Annex 1). The initiative was presented to His Excellency, the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation through a concept note that described the initiative, its philosophy, goals and major activities.

After the approval of His Excellency the Minister and back-up of the initiative, a Start-up Workshop was organised on 19 April 2006. Financially supported by KariaNet, the workshop gathered six (6) development projects financed by different international donors (Annex 2), considered as core founders of this pilot network. The network will be coordinated and managed by a Facilitation and Coordination Unit, located in the Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation.

The national network aims at achieving the following:

- Allow all members to have access to the experiences of other projects within the same country, which is expected to enhance the members' capacities.
- Develop the communication skills of all members for a better dialogue, which will allow them to take profit of the available information and experiences, along with enhancing their knowledge management and sharing capacities.
- Enhance learning of all members about previous experiences (lessons learned) in order to avoid replicating similar mistakes in the future.
- Facilitate the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as means of fostering knowledge sharing and experiences exchange between different parties.
- Provide decision-makers with sound information for them to support all initiatives that seek to intensify the use of ICTs, and which could improve service delivery in general.

3. Formulation and Implementation of Basic Mechanisms of the National Network

3.1. Formulation of the Network Strategy and Work Plan

After having established the network, a small technical committee was setup by the MALR with a mandate to formulate the network strategy and work plan. This committee held two meetings at the MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations in August 2006 in order to draft the network strategy and a provisional work plan for a period of 18 months, up to 31 December 2007 as the date of completion of KariaNet phase I (Annex 3).

Submitted to the MALR, both documents (Network Strategy and 18-month Work Plan) were approved by His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation on 17 October 2006.

3.2. Establishment of the Network Structure

The network structure that was mentioned in the Strategy Paper and approved by the MALR consisted of the following bodies:

First, the Steering Committee: Chaired by Dr. Fadia Nosseir, Acting Director of MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations, the committee will be composed of different authorities in charge of programmes and initiatives on rural poverty reduction, as well as representatives of the Agricultural Research Center. The committee mandate is to set the general policy of the network and approve the annual work plans and reports before their submission to His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture for approval.

Second, the Technical Committee: Composed of managers of programmes and initiatives on rural poverty reduction, that are members in the national network, in addition to any expert or specialist that can be identified by the Steering Committee. The committee plays an important role within the network in terms of contributing to the preparation of the

annual work plans and reports for their approval by the Steering Committee. Furthermore, it is responsible on monitoring and evaluating the network activities.

Third, the Facilitation and Coordination Unit: This unit is part of and hosted by MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations, and chaired by the National Facilitator of the network, assisted by two facilitators and two secretaries. The duties of this unit are the implementation of the network activities, according to the annual workplans approved by both the Technical and Steering Committees. It also contributes to the preparation of the annual work plans and reports, along with the setup committees.

4. National Network Achievements

4.1. Organisation of a Training Course on Knowledge Sharing and Facilitation

Aiming at enhancing and strengthening the capacities of the national network members in terms of knowledge sharing and facilitation, KariaNet and the MALR joined their efforts to organise in November 2006 a training course on knowledge sharing tools and facilitation techniques for the benefit of the network facilitators. The course lasted three days and, at the end of this course, a Dgroup, a digest electronic forum similar to the ones used by KariaNet, was established for the members of the national network to enhance their exchange and sharing (www.dgroups.org/groups/pren).

A workshop report was presented to His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, which contained the following recommendations:

- 1- Request that each member project manager contribute funds to finance the network operations and facilitate his staff access to the network tools to enhance knowledge sharing between the members.
- 2- Organise regular meetings of the network facilitators at every project in order to develop their skills and exchange their experiences.
- 3- Improve Internet access at the level of each project through the mobilization of a DSL line within the project.
- 4- Get the trained staff officially agreed by the Facilitation and Coordination Unit as facilitators of the national network at the level of their projects and request the project managers to support them in their role.
- 5- Request each trained facilitator to prepare, at least, one success story about his/her project achievements to share it with the other network members.
- 6- Organise a one-day workshop or meeting in December 2006.
- 7- Organise training courses for the benefit of the facilitators of the national network on knowledge sharing through the use of ICTs.

4.2. Organisation of the 1st Workshop on Knowledge Sharing

The workshop was organised in March 2007 by the Agricultural Production Intensification Project of Menia Governorate. Two success stories in the form of video films were presented. It has to be said that the workshop costs were entirely covered by the project. For the first time, each success story gave room to the beneficiary to speak about his/her project or activity, given that success stories used to be written by a project staff.

The first story puts into perspective a woman beneficiary that benefited of a micro-credit from the APIP Project and in collaboration with the Community Development Association in Menbal village. The beneficiary invested the funds in a poultry project, in spite of the spread of Bird Flu. She said that the Rural Woman Development Center and the Agricultural Extension Service gave her training on how to deal with birds and on immunisation procedures that she could apply to protect her animals against this disease.

The second story gave an opportunity to another woman beneficiary who benefited of a micro-credit to buy two goats with high milk production (4 kilos of milk per day). She said she attended a primary training in the Rural Woman Development Center on small ruminant husbandry and health, and participated to a workshop on the same subject, organised in collaboration the Veterinary Faculty of Asyut University. She also reported her learning on how to mix the needed fodders for goats and how to take care of them.

After the two success stories, the Head of the Agriculture Extension Service at Menia made a presentation on the different activities of his service, and the collaborative work the service carries out in collaboration of the APIP Project. *During his speech, he mentioned some success stories, such as the enhancement of cattle reproductive performance.

At the end of the workshop, a general discussion took place, and the following points were highlighted:

- 1- The APIP Project in Menia Governorate succeeded in converting the successful story technique from being written by a project staff into a forum that turns the beneficiary into the "narrator" of his/her own story. This was considered as a good example that should inspire the other members.
- 2- The presented success stories did not reflect the beneficiary conditions before and after the micro-credit (setting the problematic situation of the beneficiary). This is why the success story did not give an idea to the participants about the changes that occurred after benefiting from the micro-credit. In other words, the success stories did not show to which level the micro-credit contributed to solve the problematic situations of both beneficiaries.
- 3- In the first video, the interviewer interrupted the beneficiary many times, seemingly to lead her towards a certain direction. The second video showed less interference from the interviewer. It is also much better to prevent that the interviewer appears on the screen, sometimes giving his back to the camera.
- 4- The manager of APIP Project in Menia Governorate highlighted the tremendous difficulties encountered by the project to obtain the "high-yielding" goat species taken by the second beneficiary. However, these difficulties were not mentioned in the video.

Given the success of this first workshop, it was agreed and planned to organize two other similar workshops: one in El Fayyoun in October 2007, and one in Beni Suweif in November 2007, and both will be financed by APIP Project. The first workshop of El Fayyoun is supposed to be organized these days, wherein members of the National Network can exchange experiences about solving similar problems.

4.3. Use of the Network Dgroup for Knowledge Sharing

Since the opening of the PREN Dgroup in November 2006, network members started exchanging e-mails regularly. They used it to exchange information and share experiences through documents written in both English and Arabic languages. However, after a few weeks, the enthusiasm for writing and work decreased. Therefore, members should reflect on topics that interest their projects and start by an inventory of themes of interest for them in order to organise electronic discussions on these themes.

The number of emails exchanged through the Dgroup between the network members is 93, 17 resources were uploaded on the same platform.

4.4. Registration of New Members in the Network Dgroup

The network Dgroup started with 15 members. Then, some new member requested to join either during meetings of new projects or in an organised workshop. As a result, 5 new members have been added to Dgroup, included two members of Woman Economic Enhancement Project, financed by the African Development Bank. Therefore, 20 persons are subscribers in the network Dgroup.

Now, seven projects are members of the network after adding the AfDB-funded WEEP Project. And the network and its Dgroup are still open for any members.

4.5. Organisation of Regular Meetings of Steering and Technical Committees

The approved workplan included 4 meetings per for the Technical Committee and 2 meetings per year for the Steering Committee per year, until the end of 2007. Unfortunately, up till now none of these meetings has been held **because the minister's decision to officially setup both committees is not issued yet**, for unexplained reasons, despite the fact that the Minister has approved the primary composition of both committees that was presented to him on the draft de on 17 October 2006.

Attempting to understand the reasons of delaying the issuance of this important decision since October 2006, the Facilitation and Coordination Unit received different and contradicting answers:

- 1- The draft of the decision was directed to the MALR Legal Affairs Department, which had a negative opinion concerning the legality of the network, on the basis of unexplained reasons.
- 2- Then, the Facilitation and Coordination Unit was informed that the decision might be issued if some of the suggested members of the Steering Committee are discarded and replaced.
- 3- Then, the Facilitation and Coordination Unit was informed that the decision might be issued if it is only one page.

Although all requests were satisfied, the decision was not issued up till now. However, it is worth mentioning that Dr. Fadia Nosseir, Acting Director of MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations, facilitated all needed procedures in order to establish the network and make it function, which actually tempered the negative effects of the delay in issuing the required ministerial decision.

5. Conclusion and lessons

- 1- It is important to find a source of funding to support the national network activities and avoid delays in activity implementation.
- 2- There is a need to suggest new topics of interest for all members in terms of success story documentation, which will certainly foster knowledge sharing within the network.
- 3- It is of paramount importance to clarify, at the onset of such a pilot experience, the official position of the host authority, and obtain its required support, at least on legal issues.

ANNEXES

KariaNet Concept Note on the Initiative of Setting Up the National Network on Knowledge Sharing for Rural Poverty in Egypt

1. Introduction

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is seeking, according to its strategy for 2002-2006, to fight rural poverty and enhance capacities of poor people and their organizations in terms of knowledge and technology.

In this context, IFAD had, in collaboration with the International Developing Research Center (IDRC), established a regional network (KarniaNet), which aims at fostering the use of modern communication tools among IFAD-funded projects in the Near East and North Africa region, in order to facilitate knowledge sharing and experience exchange between them. The network is composed of ten (10) member projects from five (5) countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Sudan).

In the light of the lessons learned from previous experiences and similar initiatives in other regions, building of a strong and sustainable network requires laying strong foundations at the local and national levels for a maximal benefit and a sustainability reason. In this perspective, IFAD decided to assist the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation in establishing a pilot national network to link all IFAD-funded projects in the country, as well as other developmental projects and initiatives funded by international donors, interested in rural poverty reduction. KariaNet will give its financial or material support, up to the limit of its capacities, to the setup of this national network, which will be hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations).

2. Network Goals and Objectives

The national network will foster exchange of information and sharing of experiences between its members, which will save time and efforts in solving problems encountered by the development projects and initiatives. The network will certainly support a win-win situation as all parties will benefit from it, especially rural communities.

Furthermore, the network will serve as a coordination mechanism between all member development projects and initiatives that work on similar topics, and offer them a forum to setup working groups on topics of mutual interest.

3. Rationale for the Network Setup

1. Egypt is considered a model recipient for the establishment of this pilot network, given that the existence of a large portfolio IFAD-funded projects and initiatives. This also

substantiated by the national, public commitment, at the governmental and societal levels, to promote and enhance the use of ICTs for development.

2. Problems causing rural poverty encountered by the developmental projects and initiatives in the same country as well as characteristics of the target groups are similar to a large extent.
3. Modern communication technologies are available, which represents an additional motive for the establishment of this network on order to share knowledge and exchange experiences between development projects and initiatives.

4. Network Members

This network will be composed of all projects and initiatives that act in the field of rural poverty reduction, whether they are financed by IFAD or other international donors, in additions to national authorities, research institutions, etc. under the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, and concerned by rural poverty.

Also, the network is open for membership to any person or authority that is ready to provide any assistance in terms of advice, financial or material support.

5. Network Work Plan

All MALR divisions, having a stake in rural poverty reduction will be informed about the network initiative, as well as the international organisations acting in the field of rural poverty reduction in Egypt, such as the following:

- Agricultural research institutions of the Agricultural Research Center (ARC).
- Development projects and initiatives funded by international donors.
- Some MALR divisions that are concerned by rural poverty alleviation activities.

Members affiliated to the network will contribute financial and material resources to support the activities of the network.

It is suggested to organize a workshop in the first quarter 2006 (January – March) to discuss the required steps for the establishment of the national network. It is also suggested to organise regular meetings every 6 months in order to revise and adapt the activity planning and the taken decisions.

6. Network Benefits and Outputs

- 1- Allow all members to have access to the experiences of other projects within the same country, which is expected to enhance the members' capacities.
- 2- Develop the communication skills of all members for a better dialogue, for the members to take profit of the available information and experiences, along with enhancing knowledge management and sharing capacities.
- 3- Enhance learning of all members about previous experiences (lessons learned) in order to avoid replicating similar mistakes in the future.

- 4- Facilitate the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as means of fostering knowledge sharing and experiences exchange between different parties.
- 5- Provide decision-makers with sound information for them to support all initiatives that seek to intensify the use of ICTs, and which could improve service delivery in general.

7. Next Steps for the Network Setup

Activity	Step	Estimated time
3.12.1	Prepare a concept note on the initiative to share with all potential members	January 2006
3.12.2	Present the initiative to the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation in Egypt for agreement and support	January 2006
3.12.3	Prepare a list of all potential actors (development projects and initiatives) to be involved in this network	January 2006
3.12.4	Organise a workshop to set up the National Network	January 2006
3.12.5	Prepare an action plan for two years with the participation of all members	February – March 2006
3.12.6	Organise a thematic workshop on an issue interesting the majority of the members	March – June 2006
3.12.7	Assist the facilitator of the network in organising the activities according to the agreed-upon action plan	July 2006 – December 2006

**List of Projects and International Organizations Representatives
Present at the Start-up Workshop of the National Network
on Knowledge Sharing for Rural Poverty Reduction in Egypt
19th April 2006**

First – International organizations

- 1- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- 2- International Developing Research Center (IDRC)
- 3- Food and Agricultural organization (FAO)
- 4- World food program (WFP)
- 5- Italian Development Society (IDS)
- 6- European Union (EU)

Second – International Developmental projects

- 1- Agricultural Production Intensification Project in Northern Upper Egypt (previously funded by IFAD and now by the Government).
- 2- West Nubaria Rural Development Project (financed by IFAD and IDS-Italy).
- 3- Sohag Rural Development Project (financed by IFAD and the World Bank).
- 4- Strengthening Relations between Population Culture and Environment in Agricultural Extension Programs (financed by the UNFPA and implemented by FAO).
- 5- Cooperation in Financial and Investment Sector Project (financed by the EU).
- 6- Development of Eastern Desert Bedouin Societies Project (financed by WFP).

Annex 3
**Strategy and Work Plan of
the National Network in Egypt**

1. Introduction

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is seeking, according to its strategy for 2002-2006, to fight rural poverty and enhance capacities of poor people and their organizations in terms of knowledge and technology. In this context, IFAD had, in collaboration with the International Developing Research Center (IDRC), established the **Knowledge Access in Rural Interconnected Areas Network** (KariaNet) in Middle East and North Africa, which aims at fostering the use of modern communication tools among IFAD-funded projects in this region. The network fosters the use of these technologies as a means to facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange of useful experiences and information between its members. For the time-being, the network is composed of ten (10) member projects from five (5) countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Sudan).

In the light of the lessons learned from previous experiences and similar initiatives in other regions, such as Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, and West and Central Africa, building of a strong and sustainable network requires laying strong foundations at the local and national levels for a maximal benefit and a sustainability reason. In this perspective, IFAD decided to assist the Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation in establishing a pilot national network to link all IFAD-funded projects in the country, as well as other developmental projects and initiatives funded by international donors, interested in rural poverty reduction.

Having studied KariaNet proposal, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation gave its agreement agreed to establish a national network to link all projects and initiatives acting in the field of rural poverty reduction in Egypt, especially those funded by international donors. KariaNet will give its financial or material support to the setup of this national network, which will be hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations).

On this basis, the MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations organized, in collaboration with KariaNet, the Start-up Workshop of the National Network on 19 April 2006, which was attended by 30 participants, representing different development projects and international organizations. All participants stressed the importance of this network, given its benefits for all parties, and agreed to prepare a strategy document and a work plan for the network.

The present document encompasses all ideas and suggestions that were collected by the formulation committee before and during the aforementioned start-up workshop.

2- Rationale of the Network Setup

Egypt is considered a suitable recipient for the establishment of this experimental network, given that the government allocates a great attention to rural development, for 50% of population live in poor rural areas. Moreover, IFAD finances many agricultural and rural development projects in the country, in addition to the projects and initiatives funded by other international donors.

There is also a national, public commitment, at the governmental and societal levels, to promote and enhance the use of ICTs for development.

On the other hand, problems causing rural poverty encountered by the developmental projects and initiatives in the same country as well as characteristics of the target groups are similar to a large extent.

Referring to the above-mentioned reasons, it becomes clear that this network is of paramount importance, which aims at knowledge sharing and information exchange between concerned projects and initiatives. This is even certain given the availability of modern communication technologies, which represents an additional motive for the establishment of this network.

KariaNet will give its financial or material support, up to the limit of its capacities, to the setup of this national network, which will be hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations).

3. Network Goal and Objectives

This network aims at fostering and facilitating knowledge sharing and experience exchange through the generalisation of the ICT use by its members. As a consequence, members will save time, effort and money in finding solutions to the problems they encountered. In such a win-win situation, all parties will benefit from the network, especially rural communities. Moreover, the network will serve as a coordination mechanism between all member development projects and initiatives that work on similar topics, and offer them a forum to setup working groups on topics of mutual interest.

Furthermore, given that knowledge sharing requires documentation and dissemination, the network will help its members in documenting their experiences and success stories, and strengthen dialogue and consultation between its members.

4. Network Members

The network will start functioning on the basis of the membership of all projects and initiatives that took part in the Start-up Workshop. It will then expand to encompass all projects and initiatives acting in the field of rural poverty reduction, albeit funded by IFAD, or by any other international donor, as well as all concerned public organizations and research institutions under the different ministers concerned by rural poverty

reduction. In the final run, it is expected that the network will be joined by development projects and initiatives on rural poverty reduction implemented either by NGOs or the private sector, as well as the beneficiaries of these projects and initiatives.

In addition to that, the network will always remain open to any person or party that is ready to provide any assistance in terms of advice, financial or material support.

Among other duties, members affiliated to the network will contribute financial and material resources to support the activities of the network and to sustain the network success.

5. Excepted Outputs of the Network

This network must be considered as a "physical" repository for information, gained experiences, and lessons learned accumulated out of on-going projects and previous developmental initiatives in the field of rural poverty reduction in the country.

Some of these benefits are as follows:

- 1- Allow all members to have access to the experiences of other projects within the same country, which is expected to enhance the members' capacities.
- 2- Develop the communication skills of all members for a better dialogue, for the members to take profit of the available information and experiences, along with enhancing knowledge management and sharing capacities.
- 3- Enhance learning of all members about previous experiences (lessons learned) in order to avoid replicating similar mistakes in the future.
- 4- Facilitate the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as means of fostering knowledge sharing and experiences exchange between different parties.
- 5- Provide decision-makers with sound information for them to support all initiatives that seek to intensify the use of ICTs, and which could improve service delivery in general.

6. Organizational Structure of the Network

6.1. Steering Committee

Chaired by Dr. Fadia Nosseir, Acting Director of MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations, the Steering Committee, composed of ten (10) persons maximum, with a strong development background, is in charge of network orientation. The National Network Facilitator will act as the secretary of this committee, whose mandate encompasses the following:

- 1- Design and setup of the overall strategic framework for the network.
- 2- Approval of annual work plans and reports, submitted by the the Technical Committee.
- 3- Executive decision-taking on all issues related to the network operations and activities, at all levels.

This committee must be formed by a decision from the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, and any specialist or organization representative, with an acknowledged expertise, may join the committee as a member.

The Steering Committee will ordinary meet once every 6 months, upon its chairpersons' request. However, the committee may meet on an extraordinary basis either upon its chairperson's request or on the request of two-thirds of its members. The chairperson is responsible to regularly brief His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation about the meetings of the committee, for approval of the decisions taken by the committee.

A ministerial decision will be issued from His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation to form the Steering Committee, and define its organizational by-laws.

6.2. Technical Committee

The Technical Committee is in charge of planning and monitoring all technical activities of the network through the preparation of annual work plans and reports it submit to the Steering Committee for approval. It also can also develop recommendations for a better performance of the network. The main duties of the committee are as follows:

- 1- Preparation of annual work plans for submission to the Steering Committee for approval.
- 2- Supervision of the programming and implementation of the activities, according to the approved work plans.
- 3- Monitoring and evaluation of the planned activities.
- 4- Preparation of annual progress reports for submission to the Steering Committee for approval.

The committee encompasses representatives of all projects and initiatives affiliated to the network, with an acknowledged expertise in developmental work. The members of Technical Committee elect the chairperson of the meeting in order to administer the meeting on the basis of the agreed-upon agenda.

The committee meets regularly one every 3 months, on the National Facilitator's request. However, the committee may meet on an extraordinary basis when needed, either on the National Facilitator's request, or upon the request of half of its members. The Technical Committee submits the annual work plans and reports it prepares to the Steering Committee for approval. The submitted work plans and reports are considered approved after 30 days from the date of sending them, even if there is no reply from the Steering Committee.

A ministerial decision will be issued from His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation to form the Technical Committee, and define its organizational by-laws.

6.3. Facilitation and Coordination Unit

The Facilitation and Coordination Unit is considered as the operation center of the network. Headed by the National Facilitator, it is located at the MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Its main duties are as follows:

- 1- Activation of the network activities and contribution to the preparation of annual work plans along with the formed committees, as well as the implementation of the agreed-upon plans.
- 2- Organisation of the meetings of the Steering and Technical committees, as well as the preparation of the documents of the meetings and their diffusion to the concerned members in due time.
- 3- Preparation of the minutes of the meetings of the Steering and Technical Committees, and their presentation to the concerned members for approval.
- 4- Implementation of all procedures required for the implementation of the planned activities, according to the agreed-upon work plans.
- 5- Regular communication and contact with designated contact persons of the projects and initiatives affiliated to the network.
- 6- Fund raising lobbying towards the international organizations and donors for secure additional funds for the network.

6.4. Annual Work Plans and Progress Reports

The Technical Committee, in collaboration with the Facilitation and Coordination Unit, prepares, at the end of each year, a draft annual work plan, including all activities that the network is seeking to implement during the next year. The draft annual work plan is submitted to the Steering Committee for approval. After the SC approval of the submitted draft, and taking into consideration of eventual adjustments requested by the SC, the draft document evolves into an executive annual work plan and it is the obligation of the National Facilitator and the Technical Committee to implement this work plan, being both accountable towards the Steering Committee.

Similarly, the Technical Committee will, at the end of each year, prepare a draft annual progress report, reporting on all planned and implemented network activities, in accordance with the agreed-upon annual work-plan of the terminating year. The draft document is also submitted to the Steering Committee for approval.

7. Organizational Structure of the Network

Different parties contribute to the in cash or in kind funding of the network activities, especially the MALR, the projects and initiatives that are members of the network, as well as KariaNet. In addition to that, the MALR Department of Foreign Agricultural Relations will act to search for and secure additional sources of funding in order to cover the network activities.